

Appln. No. 10/039,191
Amendment dated August 30, 2004
Reply to Office Action mailed May 28, 2004

REMARKS

Applicant's attorney is pleased to note that the Office Action mailed May 28, 2003 indicates that Claims 10-12, 18, and 19 contain allowable subject matter. By the foregoing amendments, Claim 10 has been rewritten in independent form to include all of the features recited in its base claim (i.e., original independent Claim 1) and its intervening claims (i.e., original dependent Claims 4-9), while Claim 12 has been rewritten in independent form to include all of the features recited in its base claim (i.e., original independent Claim 1). Further, Claim 18 has been rewritten in independent form to include all of the features recited in its base claim (i.e., original independent Claim 13) and its intervening claims (i.e., original dependent Claims 14-17). In the foregoing circumstances, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent Claims 10, 12, and 18 are in condition for allowance.

With respect to Claims 2-9, they have been amended such that they now depend, either directly or indirectly, from amended Claim 12. Claim 11 depends directly from amended independent Claim 10. Likewise, Claims 19 and 20 depend, either directly or indirectly, from amended independent Claim 18. In such circumstances, it is believed that Claims 2-9, 11, 19, and 20 are also in condition for allowance.

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The remaining claims have been rejected on prior art grounds. More particularly, Claims 1 and 2 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Mayer et al. U.S. Patent No. 4,827,940, while Claims 1, 4-6, 13, 14, 21, and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bush et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,683,447. Claims 13 and 20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Schaldach U.S. Patent No. 5,922,015. Lastly, Claim 3 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Mayer reference, and Claims 7-9, 15-17, 23, and 24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bush reference. These rejections have been obviated by the cancellation herein of Claims 1, 13-17, and 21-24, and the amendment to Claims 2-9 and 20.

The remaining references have not been cited against the pending claims. Applicant's attorney is in agreement with the Examiner concerning the relevance of these references to the pending claims.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicant's attorney respectfully requests reexamination and allowance of Claims 2-12 and 18-20. If such action cannot be taken, however, the Examiner is cordially invited to place a telephone call to applicant's attorney in order that any outstanding issue may be resolved without the issuance of a further Office Action.

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No fees are believed to be due in connection with the submission of this Amendment. If there are any fees due as a result of this Amendment, including extension and petition fees, the Examiner is authorized to charge them to Deposit Account No. 501402.

Respectfully Submitted,

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